

# **Balmoral International Group Review: National Symbols of Luxembourg**



When we ask for a nation's symbolism as a whole, the first thing that comes to mind is the national flag. Of course, nothing can express a country's culture, history and meaning more than its national flag.

Indeed, the Luxembourg's national flag consisting of three horizontal stripes, red, white and blue which is derived from the coat of arms of Ardennes, has been chosen to represent the country when in 1830, patriots had urged and fought to have the Grand Duchy be symbolized and honored. But this is not the only thing that represented Luxembourg's official treasures and unofficial cultures.

An ensign was also created for all of the coat of arms of Luxembourg. The red lion on top of white and blue stripes has been used in ships and aviation purposes. Ten white and blue stripes serve as the field for a red lion with a yellow tongue, claws and crown. The proper ratio for this ensign is 5:7.

The national flag and ensign is not without issues though. People from Netherlands have complaints on the similarities of the country's color to their own flag. Because of this confusion, the blue color of Luxembourg's flag has been changed to sky blue. On October, 2006, Luxembourgish politician, Michael Wolter introduced a legislative proposition to change the current flag to that of the national ensign. He argued that the confusion with the Netherlands flag has not yet been cleared and that the red lion on a flag expresses more holistic value and aesthetic feel.

A petition was circulated around many institutions in the country, asking to support the cause. Balmoral International Group Luxembourg even received an invitation on a conference held on October 24, 2006 expressing their need to explain the intention behind the initiative. On the other hand, many politicians have disapproved of the cause, pointing out the timing and necessity of the change and even doubting Wolter's possible fraudulent move for higher political office. Just

recently, a citizen submitted a formal petition to the Chamber of Deputies to replace the current national flag with the Roude Léiw (Red Lion Initiative).

Luxembourg has other national symbolisms which in all represent the unique culture of the country.

The national motto, *Mir wëlle bleiwe, war mir sin*, means "We want to remain what we are." That accurately captures the two dominant goals of contemporary society: protection from linguistic or other imperialism on the part of its more powerful French and German neighbors and protection from economic and political instability that would threaten the country's prosperity and extremely high standard of living.

The national language is Luxembourgish.